

Introduction

The Puente Program is an academic preparation program for educationally disadvantaged students that is co-sponsored by the University of California at Berkeley and the California Community College Chancellor's Office. Puente is a full-year program which consists of English instruction (English A in the fall and 1A in the spring), counseling (Human Development 8 in fall and Human Development 5 in spring) and mentorship. The Puente Program is open to all students but the program serves primarily Latino students.

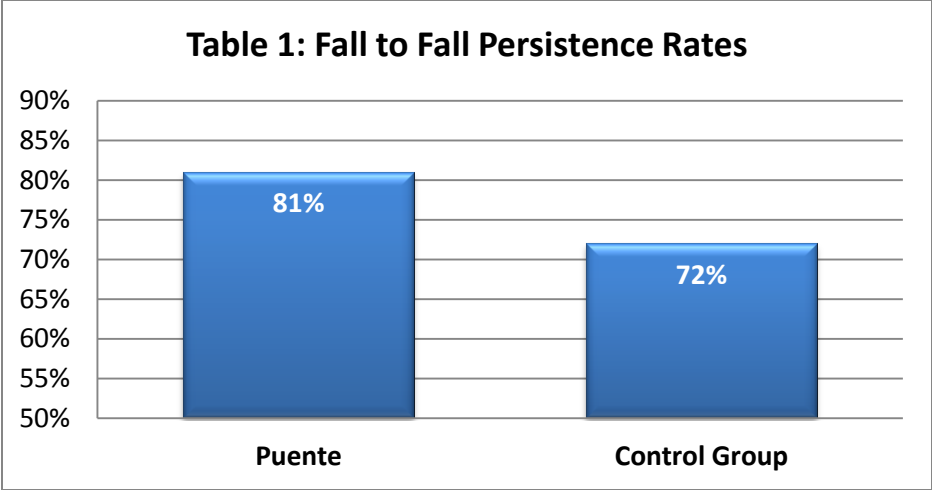
The purpose of this study is to track Puente students from their initial participation to determine their academic and goal achievement over time and compare them to a group of similar students who were non-participants.

Methodology

A comprehensive analysis was conducted on Puente cohorts who started the program in 2009, 2010, and 2011 (n=112). Puente students were compared to a control group of Latino students who were full time, enrolled in English A during the 2009-2011 fall terms and did not receive any student support services (n = 660). Outcomes for Puente students and students in the control group were tracked for three years.

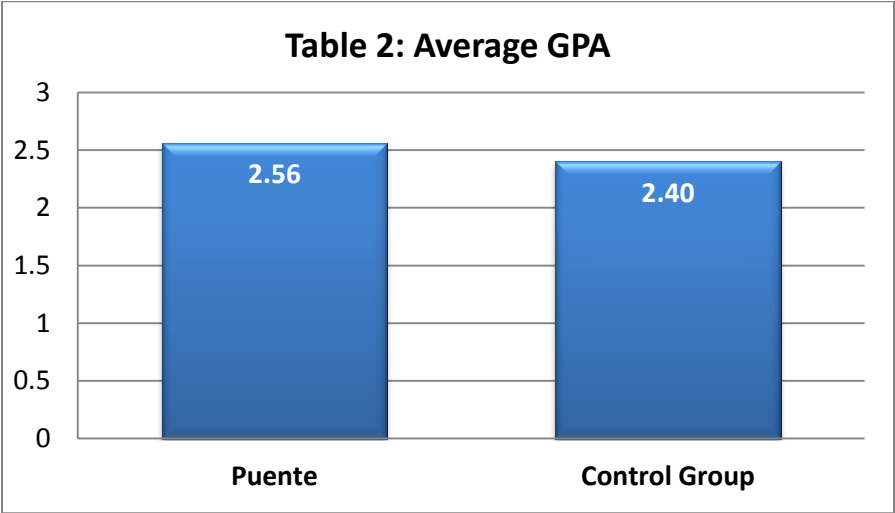
Persistence

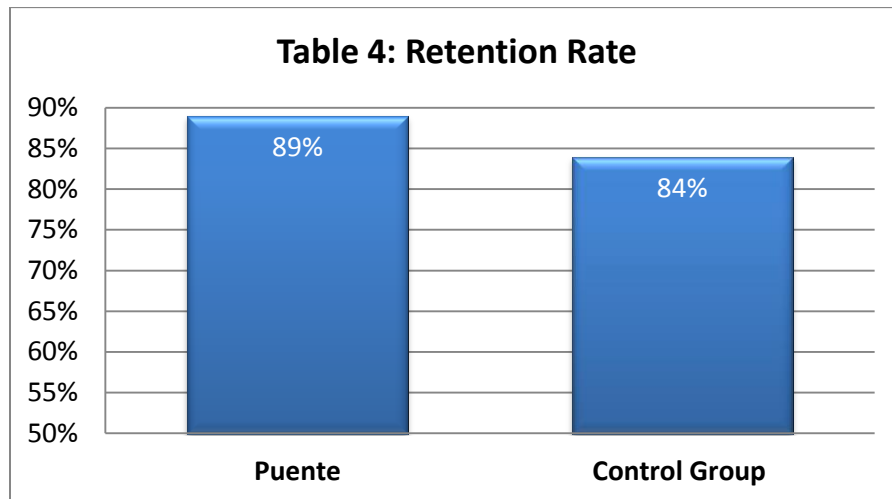
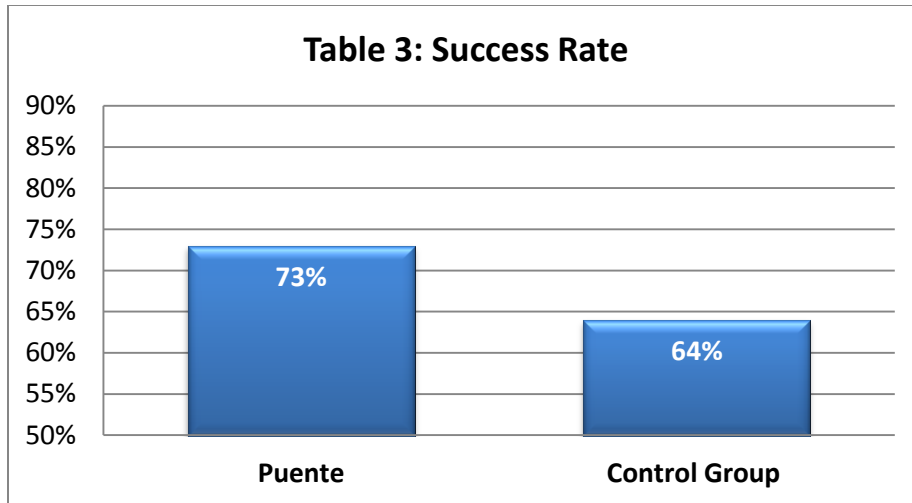
Persistence refers to tracking student enrollment over two or more terms. Overall, Puente students demonstrate high fall to fall persistence rates (Table 1). Students in Puente had a fall to fall persistence rate of 81%, 9 percentage points higher than the control groups' persistence rate of 72%.



Academic Performance

The average grade point average (GPA) of Puente students while they were in the program was 2.56. The control group had an average GPA of 2.40 during the same period (Table 2). Puente students had a 73% success rate (percentage of courses completed all with a grade of A, B, C or Pass), 9 percentage points higher than the control group success rate of 64% (Table 3). When looking at retention rates (percentage of courses completed, regardless of final grade), Puente students were retained at a rate of 89% while the control group had an 84% retention rate.





Goal Achievement

Students achieve various milestones on the way to graduation or transfer to a four-year institution. Successful completion of transfer-level English (English 1A) is one of those milestones. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of Puente students enrolled in English 1A and 74% successfully completed the course in 3 years. In contrast, 69% of students in the control group enrolled in English 1A and 46% successfully completed the course, 28 points lower than the Puente students (Table 5). In addition, 59% of Puente students have completed 30 or more transferable units in 3 years, 13 percentage points higher than the control group average of 46% (Table 6).

Table 5: English 1A Enrollment and Completion

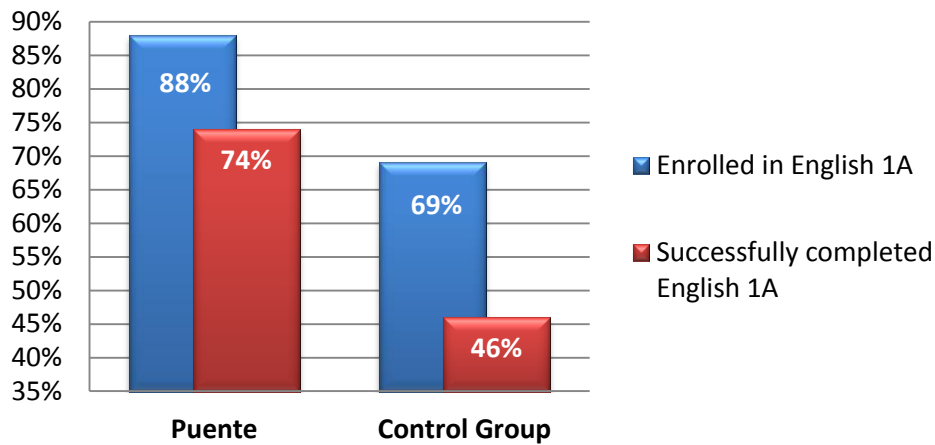
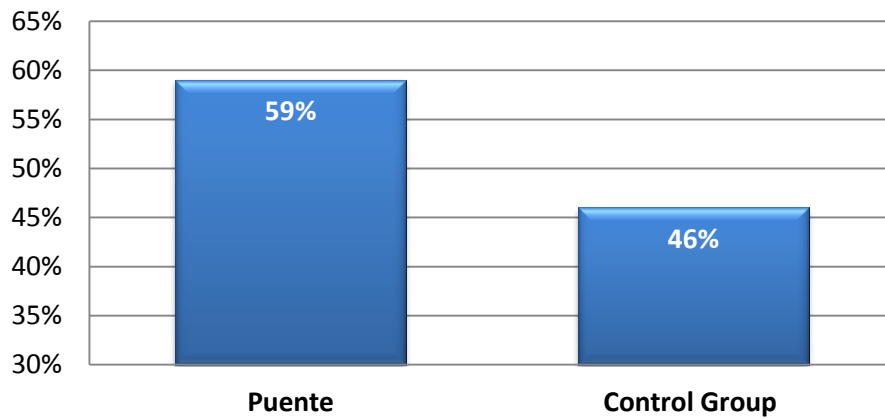
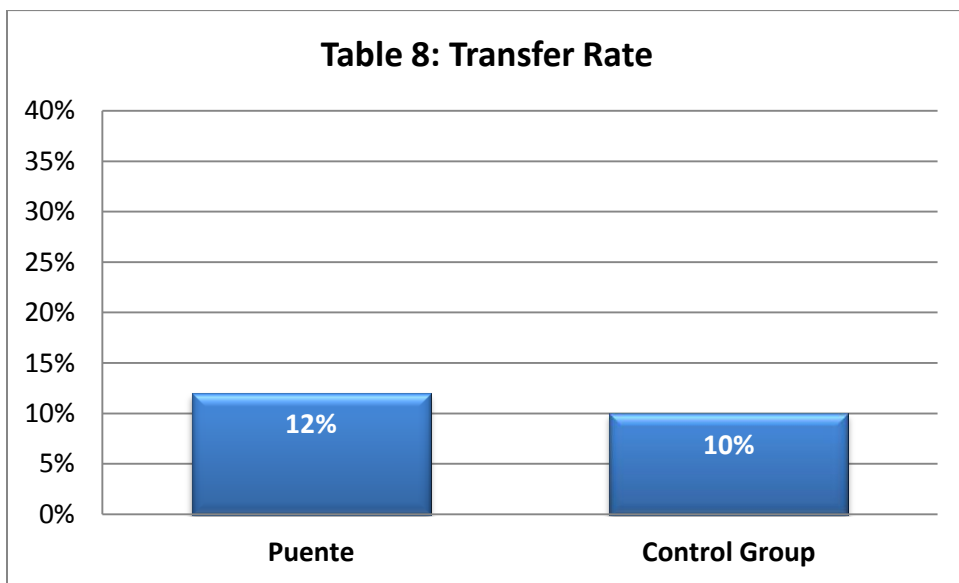
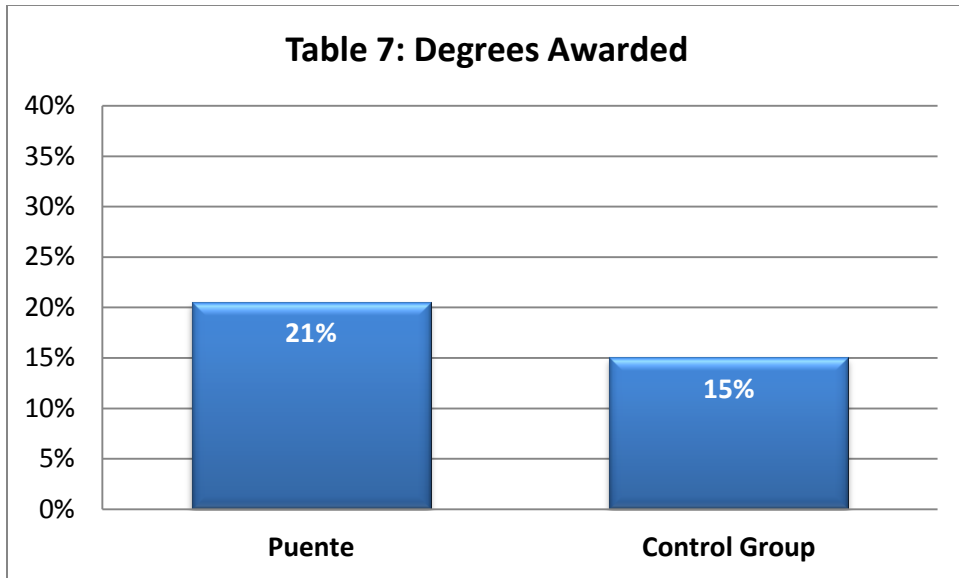


Table 6: Completion of Transferable Units



Completion

Typical goals for Puente and other full-time students include Associate degrees and transfer to a four-year institution. In this study, students in each of the three Puente cohorts and their corresponding control groups were tracked 3 years to determine goal completion (graduation or transfer). Twenty-one percent (21%) of Puente students (n=23) have earned a degree compared to 15% of the control group (n=98) (Table 7). Puente students (n=13) and students in the control group (n=65) had similar transfer rates to a four-year institution of 12% and 10%, respectively (Table 8).



Conclusion

Students in the Puente program demonstrate high fall to fall persistence rates and healthy success and retention rates while in the program. Puente students outperformed their comparison group in completing 30 or more transferable units and the successful completion of transfer level English. Puente students have similar transfer rates and slightly higher rate of degree attainment than the comparison group.